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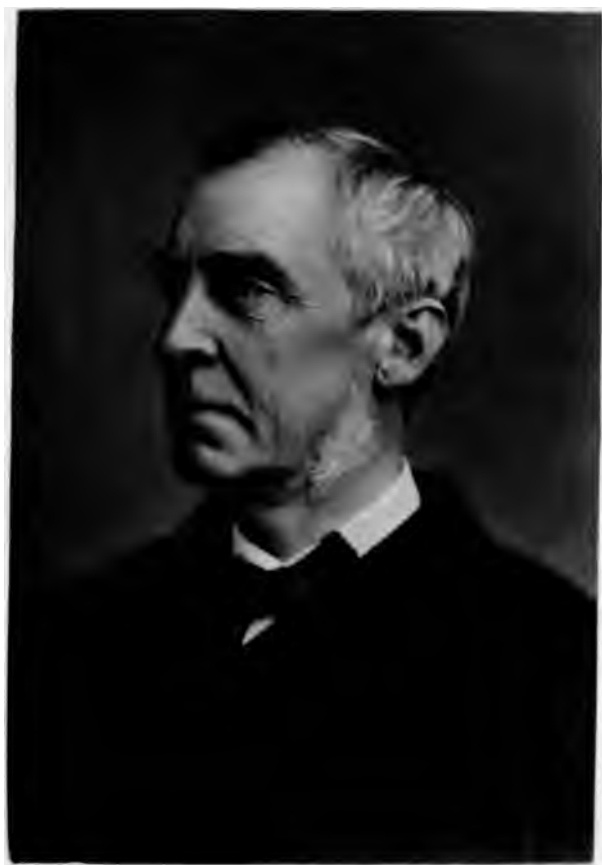
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Mary H. L. Linn



LIFE OF FROUDE





James Anthony Froude.

1880.

(From a Photograph by Elliott & Fry, Baker Street, W.)

THE
OF FROUDE

ROBERT PAUL

NEW YORK
RIBNER'S SONS
41 AVENUE



**THE
LIFE OF FROUDE**

**BY
HERBERT PAUL**

**NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
153-157 FIFTH AVENUE
1905**

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LIFE OF FROUDE

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD

IN reading biographies I always skip the genealogical details. To be born obscure and to die famous has been described as the acme of human felicity. However that may be, whether fame has anything to do with happiness or no, it is a man himself, and not his ancestors, whose life deserves, if it does 'deserve, to be written. Such was Froude's own opinion, and it is the opinion of most sensible people. Few, indeed, are the families which contain more than one remarkable figure, and this is the rock upon which the hereditary principle always in practice breaks. For human lineage is not subject to the scientific tests, which alone could give it solid value as positive or negative evidence. There is nothing to show from what source, other than the ultimate source of every good and perfect gift, Froude derived his brilliant and splendid powers. He was a

ton Rectory, with all its outward signs of prosperity and welfare, there were the seeds of death. Before Anthony Froude, the youngest of eight, was three years old, his mother died of a decline, and within a few years the same illness proved fatal to five of her children. The whole aspect of life at Dartington was changed. The Archdeacon retired into himself and nursed his grief in silence, melancholy, isolated, austere.

This irreparable calamity was made by circumstances doubly calamitous. Though destined to survive all his brothers and sisters, Anthony was a weak, sickly child, not considered likely to grow up. From his father's lips he never heard the mention of his mother's name, nor was the Archdeacon himself capable of showing any tenderness whatever. In place of a mother the little boy had an aunt, who applied to him principles of Spartan severity. At the mature age of three he was ducked every morning at a trough, to harden him; in the ice-cold water from a spring, and whenever he was naughty he was whipped. It may have been from this unpleasant discipline that he derived the contempt for self-indulgence, and the indifference to pain, which distinguished him in after life. On the other hand, he was allowed to read what he liked, and devoured Grimm's *Tales*, *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, and *The Arabian Nights*. He was an imaginative and reflective child, full of the wonder in which philosophy begins.

of drawing. John, though forced into a lawyer's office, would if left to himself have become an artist by profession; The nearest to Anthony in age was William, afterwards widely celebrated as a naval engineer. Then came Robert, the most attractive of the boys. A splendid athlete, compared by Anthony with a Greek statue, he had sweetness as well as depth of nature. His drawings of horses were the delight of his family; and when his favourite hunter died he wrote a graceful elegy on the afflicting event. The influence of his genial kindness was never forgotten by his youngest brother; but there was a stronger and more dominating personality of which the effect was less beneficial to a sensitive and nervous child.

Richard Hurrell Froude is regarded by High Churchmen as an originator of the Oxford Movement, and he impressed all his contemporaries by the brilliancy of his gifts. Dean Church went so far as to compare him with Pascal. But his ideas of bringing up children were naturally crude, and his treatment of Anthony was more harsh than wise. His early character as seen at home is described by his mother in a letter written a year before her death, when he was seventeen. Fond as she was of him and proud of his brilliant promise, she did not know what to make of him, so wayward was he and inconsiderately selfish. "I am in a wretched state of health," the poor lady explained, "and quiet

is important to my recovery and quite essential to my comfort, yet he disturbs it for what he calls 'funny tormenting,' without the slightest feeling, twenty times a day. At one time he kept one of his brothers screaming, from a sort of teasing play, for near an hour under my window. At another he acted a wolf to his baby brother, whom he had promised never to frighten again."¹

Anthony was the baby brother, and though this form of teasing was soon given up, the temper which dictated it remained. Hurrell, it should be said, inflicted severe discipline upon himself to curb his own refractory nature. In applying the same to his little brother he showed that he did not understand the difference between Anthony's character and his own. But lack of insight and want of sympathy were among Hurrell's acknowledged defects.

Conceiving that the child wanted spirit, Hurrell once took him up by the heels, and stirred with his head the mud at the bottom of a stream. Another time he threw him into deep water out of a boat to make him manly. But he was not satisfied by inspiring physical terror. Invoking the aid of the præternatural, he taught his brother that the hollow behind the house was haunted by a monstrous and malevolent phantom, to which, in the plenitude of his imagination, he gave the name of Peningre. Gradually the child discovered that Peningre was an illusion, and began

¹ Guiney's *Hurrell Froude*, p. 8.

to suspect that other ideas of Hurrell's might be illusions too. Superstition is the parent of scepticism from the cradle to the grave. At the same time his own faculty of invention was rather stimulated than repressed. He was encouraged in telling, as children will, imaginative stories of things which never occurred.

In spite of ghosts and muddy water Anthony worshipped Hurrell, a born leader of men, who had a fascination for his brothers and sisters, though not perhaps of the most wholesome kind. The Archdeacon himself had no crotchets. He was a religious man, to whom religion meant duty rather than dogma, a light to the feet, and a lantern for the path. A Tory and a Churchman, he was yet a moderate Tory and a moderate Churchman; prudent, sensible, a man of the world. To Hurrell Dissenters were rogues and idiots, a Liberal was half an infidel, a Radical was, at least in intention, a thief. From the effect of this nonsense Anthony was saved for a time by his first school. At the age of nine he was sent to Buckfastleigh, five miles up the River Dart, where Mr. Lowndes, the rector and patron of the living, took boarders and taught them, mostly Devonshire boys. Buckfastleigh was not a bad school for the period. There was plenty of caning, but no bullying, and Latin was well taught. Froude was a gentle, amiable child, "such a very good-tempered little fellow that, in spite of his sawniness, he is sure to be liked,"

During this year his brother Hurrell died, and the tragic extinction of that commanding spirit seemed a presage of his own early doom. Two of his sisters, both lately married, died within a few months of Hurrell, and of each other. The Arch-deacon, incapable of expressing emotion, became more reserved than ever, and scarcely spoke at all. Sadly was he disappointed in his children. Most of them went out of the world long before him. Not one of them distinguished himself in those regular professional courses which alone he understood as success. Hurrell joined ardently, while his life was spared, in the effort to counteract the Reformation and Romanise the Church of England. William, though he became a naval architect of the highest possible distinction, and performed invaluable services for his country, worked on his own account, and made his own experiments in his own fashion. Anthony, too, took his line, and went his way, whither his genius led him, indifferent to the opinion of the world. His had been a strange childhood, not without its redeeming features. Left to himself, seeing his brothers and sisters die around him, expecting soon to follow them, the boy grew up stern, hardy, and self-reliant. He was by no means a bookworm. He had learned to ride in the best mode, by falling off, and had acquired a passion for fishing which lasted as long as his life. There were few better yachtsmen in England than Froude, and he could

"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die."

It was a wholly unreformed Oxford to which Froude came. If it "breathed the last enchantments of the Middle Age," it was mediæval in its system too, and the most active spirits of the place, the leaders of the Oxford Movement, were frank reactionaries, who hated the very name of reform. Even a reduction in the monstrous number of Irish Bishoprics pertaining to the establishment was indignantly denounced as sacrilege, and was the immediate cause of Keble's sermon on National Apostasy to which the famous "movement" has been traced. John Henry Newman was at that time residing in Oriel, not as a tutor, but as Vicar of St. Mary's. He was kind to Froude for Hurrell's sake, and introduced him to the reading set. The fascination of his character acted at once as a spell. Froude attended his sermons, and was fascinated still more. For a time, however, the effect was merely æsthetic. The young man enjoyed the voice, the eloquence, the thinking power of the preacher as he might have enjoyed a sonata of Beethoven's. But his acquaintance with the reading men was not kept up, and he led an idle, luxurious life. Nobody then dreamt of an Oxford Commission, and the Colleges, like the University, were left to themselves. They were not economically managed, and the expenses of the undergraduates were heavy. Their battels were high, and no check

Newman's intellect, when left to itself, was so clear, so powerful, so intense, that it cut through sophistry like a knife, and went straight from premisses to conclusion. But it was only left to itself within narrow and definite limits. He never suffered from religious doubts. From Evangelical Protestantism to Roman Catholicism he passed by slow degrees without once entering the domain of scepticism. Dissenting altogether from Bishop Butler's view that reason is the only faculty by which we can judge even of revelation, he set religion apart, outside reason altogether. From the pulpit of St. Mary's he told his congregation that Hume's argument against miracles was logically sound. It was really more probable that the witnesses should be mistaken than that Lazarus should have been raised from the dead. But, all the same, Lazarus was raised from the dead: we were required by faith to believe it, and logic had nothing to do with the matter. How Butler would have answered Hume, Butler to whom probability was the guide of life, we cannot tell. Newman's answer was not satisfactory to Froude. If Hume were right, how could he also be wrong? Newman might say, with Tertullian, *Credo quia impossibile*. But mankind in general are not convinced by paradox, and "to be suddenly told that the famous argument against miracles was logically valid after all was at least startling."¹

¹ *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, 4th series, p. 205.

in Scotland and Germany ; that a Bishop was merely an officer ; that the apostolical succession was probably false as a fact—and, if a fact, implied nothing but historical continuity. Yet the man who said these things had devoted his whole life to his Master's service—thought of nothing else, and cared for nothing else.”¹

Froude had been taught by his brother, and his brother's set, to believe that Dissenters were, morally and intellectually, the scum of the earth. Here were men who, though not Dissenters themselves, held doctrines practically indistinguishable from theirs, and yet united the highest mental training with the service of God and the imitation of Christ. There was in the Cleaver household none of that reserve which the Tractarians inculcated in matters of religion. The Christian standard was habitually held up as the guide of life and conduct, an example to be always followed whatever the immediate consequences that might ensue. Mr. Cleaver was a man of moderate fortune, who could be hospitable without pinching, and he was acquainted with the best Protestant society in Ireland. Public affairs were discussed in his house with full knowledge, and without the frivolity affected by public men. O'Connell was at that time supreme in the government of Ireland, though his reign was drawing to a close. The Whigs held office by virtue of a compact with the Irish leader, and their Under-Secretary at Dublin

¹ *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, 4th series, p. 212.

event did not occur. What was the true origin of Ribbonism, what made it dangerous, why it had the sympathy of the people, were questions which Froude could hardly be expected to answer, inasmuch as they were not answered by Sir Robert Peel.

While Froude was at Delgany there appeared the once famous Tract Ninety, last of the series, unless we are to reckon Monckton Milnes's *One Tract More*. The author of Tract Ninety was Newman, and the ferment it made was prodigious. It was a subtle, ingenious, and plausible attempt to prove that the Articles and other formularies of the English Church might be honestly interpreted in a Catholic sense, as embodying principles which the whole Catholic Church held before the Reformation, and held still. Mr. Cleaver and his circle were profoundly shocked. To them Catholicism meant Roman Catholicism, or, as they called it, Popery. If a man were not a Protestant, he had no business to remain in the United Church of England and Ireland. If he did remain in it, he was not merely mistaken, but dishonest, and sophistry could not purge him from the moral stain of treachery to the institution of which he was an officer. Froude's sense of chivalry was aroused, and he warmly defended Newman, whom he knew to be as honest as himself, besides being saintly and pure. If he had stopped there, all might have been well. Mr. Cleaver was himself high-minded, and could appreciate the virtue

of standing up for an absent friend. But Froude went further. He believed Newman to be legally and historically right. The Church of England was designed to be comprehensive. Chatham had spoken of it, not unfairly, as having an Arminian liturgy and Calvinist articles. When the Book of Common Prayer assumed its present shape, every citizen had been required to conform, and the policy of Elizabeth was to exclude no one. The result was a compromise, and Mr. Cleaver would have found it hard to reconcile his principles with the form of absolution in the Visitation of the Sick. This was, in Mr. Cleaver's opinion, sophistry almost as bad as Newman's, and Froude's tutorship came to an end. There was no quarrel, and, after a tour through the south of Ireland, where he saw superstition and irreverence, solid churches, well-fed priests, and a starving peasantry in rags, Froude returned for a farewell visit to Delgany. On this occasion he met Dr. Pusey, who had been at Christ Church with Mr. Cleaver, and was then visiting Bray. Dr. Pusey, however, was not at his ease. He was told by a clerical guest, afterwards a Bishop, with more freedom than courtesy, that they wanted no Popery brought to Ireland, they had enough of their own. The sequel is curious. For while Newman justified Mr. Cleaver by going over to Rome, his own sons, including Froude's pupil, became Puseyite clergymen of the highest possible type.

Froude returned to Oxford at the beginning

of 1842, and won the Chancellor's Prize for an English essay on the influence of political economy in the development of nations. In the summer he was elected to a Devonshire Fellowship at Exeter, and his future seemed secure. But his mind was not at rest. It was an age of ecclesiastical controversy, and Oxford was the centre of what now seems a storm in a teacup. Froude became mixed up in it. On the one hand was the personal influence of Newman, who raised more doubts than he solved. On the other hand Froude's experience of Evangelical Protestantism in Ireland, where he read for the first time *The Pilgrim's Progress*, contradicted the assumption of the Tractarians that High Catholicity was an essential note of true religion. Gradually the young Fellow became aware that High Church and Low Church did not exhaust the intellectual world. He read Carlyle's *French Revolution*, and *Hero Worship*, and *Past and Present*. He read Emerson too. For Emerson and Carlyle the Church of England did not exist. Carlyle despised it. Emerson had probably not so much as given it a thought in his life. But what struck Froude most about them was that they dealt with actual phenomena, with things and persons around them, with the world as it was. They did not appeal to tradition, or to antiquity, but to nature, and to the mind of man. The French Revolution, then but half a century old, was interpreted by Carlyle not as Antichrist, but as God's judgment upon sin.

ships can only be described as absurd. Froude had no other profession in view, and he persuaded himself that a Church established by law must allow a wider range of opinion than a voluntary communion could afford to tolerate. As we have seen, he had defended Tract Ninety, and he claimed for himself the latitude which he conceded to Newman. It was in his case a mistake, as he very soon discovered. But the system which encouraged it must bear a large part of the blame. Meanwhile he had been employed by Newman on an uncongenial task. After the discontinuance of *Tracts for the Times*, Newman projected another series, called *Lives of the Saints*. The idea was of course taken from the Bollandist *Acta Sanctorum*. But Newman had a definite polemical purpose. Just as he felt the force of Hume's argument against the probability of miracles, so he realised the difficulty of answering Gibbon's inquiry when miracles ceased. Had they ever ceased at all? Many Roman Catholics, if not the most enlightened and instructed, thought not. Newman conceived that the lives of English and Irish saints held much matter for edification, including marvels and portents of various kinds. He desired that these things should be believed, as he doubtless believed them. They proved, he thought, if they could be proved themselves, that supernatural power resided in the Church, and when the Church was concerned he laid his reason aside. He was extraordinarily sanguine. "Rationalise,"

them under the best guidance; and Petre, the learned historian of the Round Towers, showed him a host of curious antiquities, including a utensil which had come to be called the Crown of Brian Boru. Legendary history made no impression upon Froude. The actual state of Ireland affected him with the deepest interest. A population of eight millions, fed chiefly upon potatoes, and multiplying like rabbits, light-hearted, reckless, and generous, never grudged hospitality, nor troubled themselves about paying their debts. Their kindness to strangers was unbounded. In the wilds of Mayo Froude caught the smallpox, and was nursed with a devotion which he always remembered, ungrateful as in some of his writings about Ireland he may seem. After his recovery he wandered about the coast, saw the station of Protestant missionaries at Achill, and was rowed out to Clare Island, where a disabled galleon from the Armada had been wrecked. His studies in hagiology led him to consider the whole question of the miraculous, and he found it impossible to work with Newman any more. A religion which rested upon such stories as Father Colgan's was a religion nurtured in lies.

All this, however, had nothing to do with the Church of England by law established, and Froude was ordained deacon in 1845. The same year Newman seceded, and was received into the Church of Rome. No similar event, before or

clergyman devoted to his people is described with much tenderness of feeling.

This sermon, of which he gave a copy to John Duke Coleridge, the future Lord Chief Justice of England, was Froude's first experiment in authorship, and it was at least harmless. As much cannot be said for the second, two anonymous stories, called *Shadows of the Clouds* and *The Lieutenant's Daughter*. *The Lieutenant's Daughter* has been long and deservedly forgotten. *Shadows of the Clouds* is a valuable piece of autobiography. Without literary merit, without any quality to attract the public, it gives a vivid and faithful account of the author's troubles at school and at home, together with a slight sketch of his unfortunate love-affair.

Froude was a born story-teller, with an irresistible propensity for making books. The fascination which, throughout his life, he had for women showed itself almost before he was out of his teens ; and in this case the feeling was abundantly returned. Nevertheless he could, within a few years, publish the whole narrative, changing only the names, and then feel genuine surprise that the other person concerned should be pained. He was not inconsiderate. Those who lived with him never heard from him a rough or unkind word. But his dramatic instinct was uncontrollable and had to be expressed. The Archdeacon read the book, and was naturally furious. If he could have been in any way

which

chemist can foretell the effect of mixing an acid with an alkali. I have no intention of expressing any opinion of my own upon this subject. The important thing is that Froude became in the philosophic sense a Determinist, and his conviction that Calvin was in that respect the best philosopher among theologians strengthened his attachment to the Protestant cause.

Protestantism apart, however, Froude's position as a clergyman had become intolerable. He had been persuaded to accept ordination for the reason, among others, that the Church could be reformed better from within than from without. But there were few doctrines of the Church that he could honestly teach, and the straightforward course was to abandon the clerical profession. Nowadays a man in Froude's plight would only have to sign a paper, and he would be free. But before 1870 orders, even deacon's orders, were indelible. Neither a priest nor a deacon could sit in Parliament, or enter any other learned profession. Froude was in great difficulty and distress. He consulted his friends Arthur Stanley, Matthew Arnold, and Arthur Clough. Clough, though a layman, felt the same perplexity as himself. As a Fellow and Tutor of Oriel he had signed the Articles. Now that he no longer believed in them, ought he not to give up his appointments? The Provost, Dr. Hawkins, induced him to pause and reflect. Meanwhile he published a volume

man, who was at that time on a visit to Exeter. But Kingsley, though a disciple of Carlyle, was also a hard-working clergyman, who held that the masses could be regenerated by Christian Socialism. Froude had no faith in Socialism, nor in Christianity as the Church understood it. In this year, 1848, Emerson also came to Oxford, and dined with Clough at Oriel, where they thought him like Newman. Froude was already an admirer of Emerson's essays, and laid his case before the American moralist. Emerson gave him, as might have been expected, no practical advice, but recommended him to read the Vedas. Nothing mattered much to Emerson, who took the opportunity to give a lecture in London on the Spiritual Unity of all Animated Beings. Froude attended it, and there first saw Carlyle, who burst, characteristically enough, into a shout of laughter at the close. Carlyle loved Emerson; but the Emersonian philosophy was to him like any other form of old clothes, only rather more grotesque than most.

In the Long Vacation of 1848 Froude went alone to Ireland for the third time, and shut himself up at Killarney. From Killarney he wrote a long account of himself to Clough :

"KILLARNEY, *July 15, 1848.*

"I came over here where for the present I am all day in the woods and on the lake and retire at night into an unpleasant hotel, where I am

Ireland had been devastated, far more than decimated, by the famine, and was simmering with insurrection, like the Continent of Europe. The Corn Laws had gone, and the Whigs were back in office, but they could do nothing with Ireland. To Froude it appeared as if the disturbed state of the country were an emblem of distracted Churches and outworn creeds. Religion seemed to him hopelessly damaged, and he asked himself whether morality would not follow religion. If the Christian sanction were lost, would the difference between right and wrong survive? His own state of mind was thoroughly wretched. The creed in which he had been brought up was giving way under him, and he could find no principle of action at all. Brooding ceaselessly over these problems, he at the same time lowered his physical strength by abstinence, living upon bread, milk, and vegetables, giving up meat and wine. In this unpromising frame of mind, and in the course of solitary rambles, he composed *The Nemesis of Faith*.¹ The book is, both in substance and in style, quite unworthy of Froude. But in the life of a man who afterwards wrote what the world would not willingly let die it is an epoch of critical importance. To describe it in a word is impossible. To describe it in a few words is not easy. Froude himself called it in after life a "cry of pain," meaning that it was intended

¹ Chapman, 1849.

book advertised. You may have seen it. It is too utterly subjective to please you. I can't help it. If the creatures breed, they must come to the birth. There is something in the thing, I know ; for I cut a hole in my heart, and wrote with the blood. I wouldn't write such another at the cost of the same pain for anything short of direct promotion into heaven."

Of Kingsley himself Froude wrote¹ to another clerical friend, friend of a lifetime, Cowley Powles: "Kingsley is such a fine fellow—I almost wish, though, he wouldn't write and talk Chartism, and be always in such a stringent excitement about it all. He dreams of nothing but barricades and provisional Governments and grand Smithfield bonfires, where the landlords are all roasting in the fat of their own prize oxen. He is so musical and beautiful in poetry, and so rough and harsh in prose, and he doesn't know the least that it is because in the first the art is carrying him out of himself, and making him forget just for a little that the age is so entirely out of joint." A very fine and discriminating piece of criticism.

The immediate effect of *The Nemesis*, the only effect it ever had, was disastrous. Whatever else it might be, it was undoubtedly heretical, and in the Oxford of 1849 heresy was the unpardonable sin. The Senior Tutor of Exeter, the Reverend William Sewell, burnt the book during a lecture

¹ April 10th, 1849.

If he could have appealed to a court of law, the authorities would probably have failed for want of evidence, and Froude would have retained his Fellowship. But he was sensitive, and yielded to pressure. He signed the paper presented to him as if he had been a criminal, and shook the dust of the University from his feet. Within ten years a new Rector, quite as orthodox as the old, had invited him to replace his name on the books of the college. It was long, however, before he returned to an Oxford where only the buildings were the same. Twenty years from this date an atheistic treatise might have been written with perfect impunity by any Fellow of any college. Nobody would even have read it if atheism had been its only recommendation. The wise indifference of the wise had relieved true religion from the paralysis of official patronage. But in 1849 the action of the Rector and Fellows was heartily applauded by the Visitor, Bishop Phillpotts, the famous Henry of Exeter. Their behaviour was conscientious, and Dr. Richards, the Rector, was a model of dignified urbanity. It is unreasonable to blame men for not being in advance of their age.

- never known what a storm is, and doesn't know what to resign himself to. I think he only knows the shady side of nature out of books. Still I think his versifying, and generally his æsthetic power is quite wonderful. . . . On the whole he shapes better than *you*, I think, but you have marble to cut out, and he has only clay. . . . Do you think that if the Council *do* ask me to give up I might fairly ask Lord Brougham as their President to get me helped instead to ever so poor an honest living in the Colonies? I can't turn hack writer, and I must have something fixed to do. Congreve is down-hearted about Oxford: not so I. I quite look to coming back in a very few years."

The Archdeacon, conceiving that the best remedy for free thought was short commons, stopped his son's allowance. Froude would have been alone in the world, if the brave and generous Kingsley had not come to his assistance. Like a true Christian, he invited Froude to his house, and made him at home there. To appreciate the magnanimity of this offer we must consider that Kingsley was himself suspected of being a heretic, and that his prominent association with Froude brought him letters of remonstrance by every post. He said nothing about them, and Froude, in perfect ignorance of what he was inflicting upon his host, stayed two months with him at Ilfracombe and Lynmouth. Yet Kingsley did not, and could not, agree with Froude. He was a resolved, serious Christian, and never dreamt of giving up his ministry. He

colours long centuries ago. Froude was a man of the world, who knew the classics, and the minds of men, and cities, and governments, and the various races which make up the medley of the universe. He wrote for the multitude who read books for relaxation, who want to have their facts clearly stated, and their thinking done for them. He satisfied all their requirements, and yet he expressed himself with the natural eloquence of a fastidious scholar. Lucky indeed were the editors who could obtain the services of such a reviewer, and he was fortunate in being able to recommend with power the poetry of his friend, Matthew Arnold.¹

Although Froude enjoyed with avidity the conversation of his chosen friends, he was not satisfied with intellectual epicureanism. He was resolved to make for himself a name, to leave behind him some not unworthy memorial. The history of the Reformation attracted him strongly. If an historian is a man of science, or a mere chronicler, then certainly Froude was not an historian. He made no claim to be impartial. He held that the Oxford Movement was not only endangering the National Church, but injuring the national character and corrupting men's knowledge of the past. He believed in the Reformation first as an historic fact, and secondly

¹ His recommendation was entirely sincere. "Matt. A.'s *Sohrab and Rustum*," he wrote to Clough, "is to my taste *all but* perfect."

as a beneficent revolt of the laity against clerical dominion. He denied that since the Reformation there had been one Catholic Church, and as an Englishman he asserted in the language of the Articles that the Bishop of Rome had no jurisdiction within this realm of England. He wanted to vindicate the reformers, and to prove that in the struggle against Papal Supremacy English patriots took the side of the king. He was roused to indignation by slanders against the character of Elizabeth ; and he held, as almost every one now holds, that the attempt to make an innocent saint of Mary Stuart was futile. Even More and Fisher he refused to accept as candidates for the crown of martyrdom. They were both excellent men. More was, in some respects, a great man. They were certainly far more virtuous than the king who put them to death. But they were executed for treason, not for heresy, and to clear their memory it is necessary to show that they had no part in conspiring with a foreign Power against their lawful sovereign. That Power, the Church of Rome, a Power till 1870, Froude cordially hated. He regarded it as an obstacle to progress, an enemy of freedom, an enslaver of the intellect and the soul. The English Catholics of his own time were mild, honourable, and loyal. Although they had been relieved of their disabilities, they had no power. Froude's reading and reflection led him to infer that when the Church was powerful it aimed a deadly blow at English independence,

and that Henry VIII., with all his moral failings, was entitled to the credit of averting it. These opinions were not new. They were held by most people when Froude was a boy. It was from Oxford that an attack upon them came, and from Oxford came also, in the person of Froude, their champion.

Froude's historical work took at first the form of essays, chiefly in *The Westminster Review* and *Fraser's Magazine*. The Rolls Series of State Papers had not then begun, and the reign of Henry was imperfectly understood. Froude was especially attracted by the age of Elizabeth, who admired her father as a monarch, whatever she may have thought of him as a man. It was 'an age of mighty dramatists, of divine poets, of statesmen wise and magnanimous, if not great, of seamen who made England, not Spain, the ruler of the seas. It was with the seamen that Froude began. His essay on *England's Forgotten Worthies*, which appeared in *The Westminster Review* for 1852, was suggested by a new, and very bad, edition of Hakluyt. It inspired Kingsley with the idea of his historical novel, *Westward Ho!* and Tennyson drew from it, many years later, the story of his noble poem, *The Revenge*. The eloquence is splendid, and the patriotic fervour stirs the blood like the sound of a trumpet. The cruelties of the Spaniards in South America, perpetrated in the name of Holy Church, are described with unflinching fidelity and unsparing

applies to Henry the famous passage in Tacitus's character of Galba, and changes *capax imperii* to *dignus imperii*, though *dignus* would have required *imperio*, and would then have made inferior sense. Some of Carlyle's queries were productive of really substantial results ; for instance, the simple words "such as" brought out the fact that the spoils of the monasteries were in part devoted to national defence. "Inveterate frenzy" is Froude's description of the years covered by the reign of Edward IV. "Fine healthy years in the main, for all their fighting," notes Carlyle. "See the Paston Letters, for one proof." Some of his recommendations are racily colloquial. "Give us time of day" is his mode of asking for more dates. Henry's instructions to his Secretary or Ambassador at Rome he pronounces "very rough matter to set upon the table uncooked," and recommends an Appendix, unluckily without avail. "Abridge, redact," he exclaims towards the end, but there was no abridgment and no redaction. On the other hand, "prestige," stigmatised by Carlyle as "a bad newspaper word," was rejected for "influence," and his insistence that English only should be used in the text, foreign languages being confined to notes, was accepted by Froude. That "new doctrines ever gain readiest hearing among the common people" he left to stand as a general proposition, although, as Carlyle reminded him, "in Germany it was by no means the common people who believed Luther first,

— but the Elector of Saxony, Philip of Hesse, etc., etc.—Scotland too.”

The conclusion at which Carlyle arrived after reading the second chapter is less favourable than his verdict upon the first. Inasmuch, however, as some of the modifications suggested were made, though by no means all of them, and as Carlyle's notions of history are worth knowing on their own account, I will transcribe his words, which are dated the 27th of September, 1855 :

“ This chapter contains a great deal of well-meditated knowledge, just insight, and sound thinking ; seems calculated to *explain* the Phænomenon of the Reformation to an unusual degree, in fact has great merit of many kinds, historical among the rest. But it seems to me (1) to be more of a Dissertation than a *Narrative* ; to want dates, specific details, *outline* of every kind. (2) The management might surely be mended ? It does not “ begin at the beginning ” (which indeed is the most difficult of all things, but also the most indispensable) ; the story is not *clear* ; or rather, as hinted above, there is no story, but an explanation of some story supposed to be already known, which is contrary to rule in writing ‘ History.’ On the whole, the Author seems to have such a conception of the subject as were well worth a better setting forth ; and if this is all he has yet *written* of his Book, I could almost advise him to *start afresh*, and remodel all this

and Spain. Whether Henry VIII. was a good man, or a bad one, is not the question. Bishop Stubbs, who cannot be accused of anti-ecclesiastical, or anti-theological prejudice, calls him a "grand, gross figure," not to be tried and condemned by ordinary standards of private morals. The only interest of his character now is its bearing upon the fate of England. If the Pope, and not the king, had become head of the English Church, would it have been for the advantage of the English people? By frankly taking the king's side Froude made two different and influential sets of enemies, especially at Oxford. High Churchmen, then and for the rest of his life, assailed him for hostility to "the Church," forgetting or ignoring the fact that the Church of England is not the Church of Rome. Liberals, on the other hand, mistook him for a friend of lawless despotism, as if Henry's opponents had been constitutional statesmen, and not arrogant Churchmen, hating liberty even more than he did.

That Froude had no faith in modern Liberalism is true enough. His political leader in 1856 was neither Palmerston nor Cobden, but Carlyle. In 1529 he would have been a King's man and not a Pope's man, an Englishman first and a Churchman afterwards. Lord Melbourne used to declare, in his paradoxical manner, that Henry VIII. was the greatest man who ever lived, because he always had his own way.

paration for the task. When he had the free run of his father's library after leaving Westminster, it was to the historical shelves that he went first ; and while his brother talked eloquently about the evils of the Reformation, he himself was studying its causes. His own entanglement in the Anglican revival was personal, accidental, and brief. It was due entirely to his affectionate admiration for Newman, aided perhaps, if by anything, by curiosity to know something about the lives of the saints. For a real saint, such as Hugh of Lincoln, he had a sincere reverence, and loved to show it. The miraculous element disgusted him, and the more he read of ecclesiastical performances the more anti-ecclesiastical he became.

The article in *The Edinburgh Review* for July, 1858, upon Froude's first four volumes is an elaborate, an able, and a bitter attack. Henry Reeve, the editor of *The Edinburgh* at that time, and for many years afterwards, was not himself a scholar, like his illustrious predecessor, Cornwall Lewis. He was a Whig of the most conventional type, regarding Macaulay and Hallam as the ideal historians, suspicious of novelty, and dismayed by paradox. Froude's critic belonged to a more advanced school of Liberalism, and shuddered at the glorification of a "tyrant" like Henry VIII. That he had also some reason for personally detesting Froude is plain from his malicious references to the *Lives of the Saints*,

a queen was capital then, if indeed it be not capital now. In an ordinary husband Henry's conduct would have been revolting. It is not attractive in him. Stubbs pleads that we cannot judge him, and abandons the attempt in despair. As he rejects with equal decision both the Roman Catholic picture and Froude's, he only puts us all to ignorance again. Froude is at least intelligible.

It is a fact, and not a fancy, that Henry provided from the spoils of the monasteries for the defence of the realm, that he founded new bishoprics from the same source, that he disarmed the ecclesiastical tribunals, and broke the bonds of Rome. The corruption of at least the smaller monasteries, some of which were suppressed by Wolsey before the rise of Cromwell, is established by the balance of evidence, and the disappearance of the Black Book which set forth their condition was only to be expected in the reign of Mary. The crime which weighs most upon the memory of the King is the execution of Fisher and More. More, though he persecuted heretics, is the saint and philosopher of the age. Of Fisher Macaulay says that he was worthy to have lived in a better age, and died in a better cause. But what if these good men, from purely conscientious motives, would have brought over a Spanish army to coerce their Protestant fellow-subjects and their lawful sovereign? That, and not speculative error, is the real charge against them. Henry did all he could to put himself in the wrong. His

atrocious request that More " would not use many words on the scaffold " makes one hate him after the lapse of well-nigh four hundred years. The question, however, is not one of personal feeling. Good men go wrong. Bad men are made by Providence to be instruments for good. It is not More, nor Fisher, it is the Bluebeard of the children's history-books who gave England Miles Coverdale's Bible, who freed her from the yoke that oppressed France till the Revolution, and oppresses Spain to-day. Froude's first four volumes are an eloquent indictment of Ultramontaniam, a plea for the Reformation, a sustained argument for English liberties and freedom of thought. No such book can be impartial in the sense of admitting that there is as much to be said on one side as on the other. Froude replied to *The Edinburgh Review* in *Fraser's Magazine* for September, 1858, and in the following month the reviewer retorted. He did not really shake the foundation of Froude's case, which was the same as Luther's. Luther, like Froude, was no democrat. To both of them the Reformation was a protest against ecclesiastical tyranny, or for spiritual freedom. " The comedy has ended in a marriage," said Erasmus of Luther and Luther's wife. It was not a comedy, and it had not ended.

Froude sometimes goes too far. When he defends the Boiling Act, under which human beings were actually boiled alive in Smithfield, he shakes

1860, Mrs. Froude died. Her religious opinions had been very different from her husband's. She had always leant towards the Church of Rome, though after her marriage she did not conform to it. He was probably under Mrs. Froude's influence when he wrote his *Essay on the Philosophy of Catholicism* in 1851, reprinted in the first series of *Short Studies*, which does not strike one as at all characteristic of him, and is certainly quite different from his noble discourse on the Book of Job, published two years later. Mrs. Froude never cared for London, and had always lived in the country. After her death Froude took for the first time a London house, and settled himself with his children in the neighbourhood of Hyde Park.

Later in the same year died his publisher, John Parker the younger, of a painful and distressing illness, through which Froude nursed him with tender affection. The elder Parker kept on the business, and brought out the remaining volumes of Froude's History. His son had been editor of *Fraser's Magazine*, and in that position Froude succeeded him at the beginning of 1861. He thus found a regular occupation besides his History. *Fraser* had a high literary reputation, and among its regular contributors was John Skelton, writing under the name of "Shirley," who became one of Froude's most intimate friends. In the *Table Talk of Shirley*¹ are some interesting

¹ Blackwood, 1895.

reign, there will not be much which I shall have to examine there, the great bulk of Lord Burleigh's papers for that time being in the Record Office—but if I can be allowed a few days' work, I believe I can turn them to good account. With my very best thanks for your own and Lord Salisbury's goodness in this matter, I remain, faithfully yours,

“J. A. FROUDE.”

A few days later he writes: “I have seen Stewart and looked through the catalogue. There appear to be about eight volumes which I wish to examine. The volumes which I marked as containing matter at present important to me are Vols. 2 and 3 on the war with France and Scotland from 1559 to 1563, Vols. 138, 152, 153, 154, 155 on the disputes relating to the succession to the English Crown, and the respective claims of the Queen of Scots, Lady Catherine Grey, Lord Darnley, and Lady Margaret Lennox. I noted the volumes only. I did not take notice of the pages because as far as I could see the volumes appeared to be given up to special subjects, and I should wish therefore to read them through.”

His growing admiration for Cecil appears in the following extracts :

“I could only do real justice to such a collection by being allowed to read through the whole of it volume by volume—and for such a large permission as that I fear it may be dangerous

no other feeling, might have kept back the fiercest of partisans from ignoring the work of a long-forgotten brother, and from dealing stabs in the dark at a brother's almost forgotten fame." The meaning of this sentence, so far as it has a meaning, was that Hurrell Froude composed a fragment on the Life of Becket which the mistaken kindness of friends published after his own premature death. If Froude had written anonymously against this work, the phrase "stabs in the dark" would have been intelligible. As he had written in his own name, and had not mentioned his brother's work at all, part at least of the accusation was transparently and obviously false.

At last, however, Freeman had gone too far. Froude had borne a great deal, he could bear no more; and he took up a weapon which Freeman never forgot. I can well recall, as can hundreds of others, the appearance in *The Nineteenth Century* for April, 1879, of "A Few Words on Mr. Freeman." They were read with a sense of general pleasure and satisfaction, a boyish delight in seeing a big bully well thrashed before the whole school. Froude was so calm, so dignified, so self-restrained, so consciously superior to his rough antagonist in temper and behaviour. Only once did he show any emotion. It was when he spoke of the dastardly attempt to strike him through the memory of his brother. "I look back upon my brother," he said, "as on the whole the most

remarkable man I have ever met in my life. I have never seen any person—not one—in whom, as I now think of him, the excellences of intellect and character were combined in fuller measure. Of my personal feeling towards him I cannot speak. I am ashamed to have been compelled, by what I can only describe as an inexcusable insult, to say what I have said.” It was not difficult to show that Freeman’s four articles in *The Contemporary Review* contained worse blunders than any he had attributed to Froude, as, for instance, the allegation that Henry VIII., who founded bishoprics and organised the defence of the country, squandered away all that men before his time had agreed to respect. Easy also was it to disprove the charge of “hatred towards the English Church at all times and under all characters” by the mere mention of Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and Hooper. The statement that Froude had been a “fanatical votary” of the mediæval Church was almost delicious in the extravagance of its absurdity; and it would have been impossible better to retort the wild charges of misrepresentation, in which it is hard to suppose that even Freeman himself believed, than by the simple words, “It is true that I substitute a story in English for a story in Latin, a short story for a long one, and a story in a popular form for a story in a scholastic one.” In short, Froude wrote a style which every scholar loves, and every pedant hates. With a light touch, but a touch which had a

at war with the Pope she was at war with him in Ireland as elsewhere. The argument, however, is double-edged. The Papal cause being no longer, for various reasons, the cause of stake and gibbet, how could there be the same ground for restricting freedom of opinion in Ireland, for passing Coercion Acts, for refusing Home Rule? As Froude himself said, "Popery now has its teeth drawn. It can bark, but it can no longer bite." "The Irish generally," he went on, "were rather superstitious than religious." These are delicate distinctions. "The Bishop of Peterborough must understand," said John Bright on a famous occasion, "that I believe in holy earth as little as he believes in holy water." Elizabeth's Irish policy was to take advantage of local factions, and to maintain English supremacy by setting them against each other. "The result was hideous. The forty-five glorious years of Elizabeth were to Ireland years of unremitting wretchedness." Nobody could complain that Froude spared the English Government. If he had been writing history, or rather when he was writing it, the mutual treachery of the Irish could not be passed over. "Alas and shame for Ireland," said Froude in New York. "Not then only, but many times before and after, the same plan [offer of pardon to murderous traitors] was tried, and was never known to fail. Brother brought in the dripping head of brother, son of father, comrade of comrade. I pardon none, said an English commander, until they have

Burke should have retained his calmness of mind in writing of Ireland when he lost it in writing of all other subjects is a curious circumstance. But it is a circumstance which entitles him to peculiar attention from the Irish historian. Burke was no oracle of Irish revolutionists. Their hero was his critic, Tom Paine. Yet Froude says that when Burke "took up the Irish cause at last in earnest, it was with a brain which the French Revolution had deranged, and his interference became infinitely mischievous."¹ As a matter of fact, his interference after 1789 had no result at all. So far as the French Revolution modified his ideas, it made them more Conservative than ever, and his object in preaching the conciliation of Catholics was to deter them from Revolutionary methods.

But Burke, like Grattan, was an Irishman, and therefore not to be trusted. If he had been an Englishman, or if he had gloried in the name of Protestant, Froude's eyes would have been opened, and he would have seen Burke's incomparable superiority to Lord Clare as a just interpreter of events. Froude looked at the rebellion and the Union from an Orange Lodge, and his book is really an Orange manifesto. Such works have their purpose, and Froude's is an unusually eloquent specimen of its class; but they are not history, any more than the speech of Lord Clare on the Union, or the Diary of Wolfe

¹ *English in Ireland*, ii. 214, 215.

Tone. Froude does not explain, nor seem to understand, what the supporters of the Irish Legislature meant. Speaker Foster said that the whole unbribed intellect of Ireland was against the Union. Foster was the last Speaker in the Irish House of Commons. He had been elected in 1790 against the "patriot" Ponsonby, and was opposed to the Catholic franchise in 1793. He was a man of unblemished character, and in a position where he could not afford to talk nonsense. Yet, if Froude were right, nonsense he must have talked. Cornwallis, an Englishman, corroborates Foster; Cornwallis is disregarded. "All that was best and noblest in Ireland" was gathered into the Orange Association, which has been the plague of every Irish Government since the Union. Froude's model sovereign of Ireland, as of England, was George III., who ordered that in a Catholic country "a sharp eye should be kept on Papists," and would doubtless have joined an Orange Lodge himself if he had been an Irishman and a subject. The *English in Ireland* is reported to have been Parnell's favourite book. It made him, he said, a Home Ruler because it exposed the iniquities of the English Government. This was not Froude's principal object, but the testimony to his truthfulness is all the more striking on that account. Gladstone, who quoted from the *English in Ireland* when he introduced his Land Purchase Bill in 1886, paid a just tribute to the "truth and honour" of the writer.

was walking with his sister by the estuary of the Kenmare River opposite Derrynane, afterwards famous as the residence of Daniel O'Connell. "For how many ages had the bay and the rocks and the mountains looked exactly the same as they were looking then? How many generations had played their part on the same stage, eager and impassioned as if it had been erected only for them! The half-naked fishermen of forgotten centuries who had earned a scanty living there; the monks from the Skelligs who had come in on high days in their coracles to say mass for them, baptize the children, or bury the dead; the Celtic chief, with saffron shirt and battle-axe, driven from his richer lands by Norman or Saxon invaders, and keeping hold in this remote spot on his ragged independence; the Scandinavian pirates, the overflow of the Northern Fiords, looking for new soil where they could take root. These had all played their brief parts there and were gone, and as many more would follow in the cycles of the years that were to come, yet the scene itself was unchanged and would not change. The same soil had fed those that were departed, and would feed those that were to be. The same landscape had affected their imaginations with its beauty or awed them with its splendours; and each alike had yielded to the same delusion that the valley was theirs and was inseparably connected with themselves and their fortunes. Morty's

Congress of Berlin, where he did nothing, or next to nothing, he attracted the gaze of every one, not for anything he said there, but because he was there at all. If he had left an autobiography, it would be priceless, not for its facts, but for its opinions. That Froude thoroughly understood him it would be rash to say. But he did perceive by sympathetic intuition a great deal that an ordinary writer would have missed altogether. For instance, the full humour of that singular occasion when Benjamin Disraeli appeared on the platform of a Diocesan Conference at Oxford, with Samuel Wilberforce in the chair, could have been given by no one else exactly as Froude gave it. Nothing like it had ever happened before. It is scarcely possible that anything of the kind can ever happen again. Froude found the origin of the Established Church in the statutes of Henry VIII. Gladstone found it, or seemed to find it, in the poems of Homer. In Disraeli's eyes its pedigree was Semitic, and it ministered to the "craving credulity" of a sceptical age, undisturbed by the provincial arrogance that flashed or flared in an essay or review.

"In the year 1864," says Froude, "Disraeli happened to be on a visit at Cuddesdon, and it happened equally that a Diocesan Conference was to be held at Oxford at the time, with Bishop Wilberforce in the chair. The clerical mind had been doubly exercised, by the appearance of Colenso on the 'Pentateuch' and Darwin on the

would be to undertake an impossibility. If the University is to get any good out of me, I must work in my own way." He did not, however, work in his own way, and the University got a great deal of good out of him all the same.

Lord Salisbury, in making Froude the offer, spoke apologetically of the stipend as small, but added that the work would be light. The accomplished Chancellor was imperfectly informed. The stipend was small enough : the work was extremely hard for a man of seventy-four. Froude's conscientiousness in preparation was almost excessive. Every lecture was written out twice from notes for improvement of style and matter. His audiences were naturally large, for not since the days of Mr. Goldwin Smith, who resigned in 1866, had anything like Froude's lectures been heard at Oxford. When I was an undergraduate, in the seventies, we all of course knew that Professor Stubbs had a European reputation for learning. But, except to those reading for the History School, Stubbs was a name, and nothing more. Nobody ever dreamt of going to hear him. Crowds flocked to hear Froude, as in my time they flocked to hear Ruskin.

One sex was as well represented as the other. Froude had left the dons celibate and clerical. He found them, for the most part, married and lay. There was every variety of opinion in the common rooms, and every variety of perambulators in the parks. London hours had been adopted, and

as for him, and his sense of what the lesson was had deepened with years. He had observed in his own day an event which made much the same impression upon him as study of the French Revolution had made upon Carlyle. When the Second Empire perished at Sedan, Froude saw in the catastrophe the judgment of Providence upon a sinister and tortuous career. If the duty of an historian be to exclude moral considerations, Froude did not fulfil it. That there were good men on the wrong side he perceived plainly enough. But that did not make it the right side, nor confuse the difference between the two.

Froude's second set of Oxford lectures, begun in the Easter Term of 1893, was entitled *English Seamen of the Sixteenth Century*, and the name of the first lecture in it, a thoroughly characteristic name, was *The Sea Cradle of the Reformation*. He was in his element, and his success was complete. How Protestant England ousted Catholic Spain from the command of the ocean, and made it Britannia's realm, was a story which he loved to tell. "The young King," Henry VIII., "like a wise man, turned his first attention to the broad ditch, as he called the British Channel, which formed the natural defence of the kingdom." It was "the secret determined policy of Spain to destroy the English fleet, pilots, masters, and sailors, by means of the Inquisition." In 1562, according to Cecil, more than twenty British subjects had been burnt at the stake in Spain

and made more impression upon the undergraduates in a few months than Stubbs had made in as many years. It was not so much the love of learning that he inspired, though the range of his studies was wide, as enthusiasm for English history because it was the history of England. His subjects were really English. Erasmus knew England thoroughly, and would have been an Englishman if he could. The Council of Trent failed to check the Reformation, and England without the Reformation would have been a different country, if not a province of Spain. Froude's lectures were events, landmarks in the intellectual life of Oxford, and the young men who came to him for advice went away not merely with dry facts, but with fructifying ideas. Distasteful as modern Parliamentary politics were to him, the position of the British Empire in the world was the dominant fact in his mind, and he regarded Oxford as a training-ground of imperial statesmanship. He was not made to run in harness, or to act as a coach for the schools. "The teaching business at Oxford," he wrote to Skelton, after his last term, "goes at high pressure—in itself utterly absurd, and unsuited altogether to an old stager like myself. The undergraduates come about me in large numbers, and I have asserted in some sense my own freedom; but one cannot escape the tyranny of the system."¹ This is severe, though not perhaps severer than

the Inaugural Lecture of Professor Firth. To a critic from the outside it seems that Boards of Studies should have power to relax their own rules, and that the utmost possible relaxation should have been granted in the case of Froude. A famous historian of seventy-four, if qualified to be a Professor at all, must be capable of managing his own work so that it may be most useful and efficient. The restrictions of which Froude, not alone, complained are really incompatible with Regius Professorships, or at least with the patronage of the Crown. They imply that the teaching branch of the University is to be entirely controlled by expert specialists on the spot. A Regius Professor is a national institution, a public man, not like a college tutor, who has purely local functions to discharge. That is a point on which Freeman would have agreed with Froude, and Stubbs would have agreed with both of them. Froude's success in spite of limitations does not show that they were wise, but that genius surmounts obstacles and breaks the barriers which seek to impede it. "To my sorrow I am popular," he said, "and my room is crowded. I know not who they are, and have no means of knowing. So it is not satisfactory. I must alter things somehow. I can't yet tell how." The opportunity never came. But he was too old and too wise a man to let such things affect his happiness, and he was happier in Oxford than in London. "Some

of the old Dons," he wrote, "have been rather touchingly kind."

There was indeed only one chance of escaping Froude's magnetism, and that was to keep out of his way. The charm of his company was always irresistible. Different as the Oxford of 1893 was from the Oxford of 1843, young men are always the same, and Froude thoroughly understood them. He had enjoyed himself at Oriel, not as a reading recluse, but as a boy out of school, and he was as young in heart as ever. Strange is the hold that Oxford lays upon men, and not less strong than strange. Nothing weakens it; neither time, nor distance, nor success, nor failure, nor the revolution of opinion, nor the deaths of friends. Oxford had been unjust to Froude, and had driven out one of her most illustrious sons in something like disgrace. Yet he never wavered in his affection for her, and after the many vicissitudes of his life he came back to Oriel with the spirits of a boy. The spells of Oxford, like the spells of Medea, disperse the weight of years.



CHAPTER XI

THE END

THE lectures on Erasmus were not public; they were delivered in Froude's private house at Cherwell Edge, and attended only by members of the University reading for the Modern History School. His public lectures on the Council of Trent and on English seamen had been so much crowded by men and women, young and old, that candidates for honours in history were scarcely able to find room. Nothing could be more honourable to Froude, or to Oxford, than his enthusiastic reception by his old University at the close of his brilliant and laborious career. But it was too much for him. Like Voltaire in Paris, he was stifled with flowers. His twentieth discourse on Erasmus begins with the pathetic sentence, "This will be my last lecture, for the life of Erasmus was drawing to an end." So was his own. His final task in this world was the preparation of *Erasmus* for the press. He had been all his life accustomed to work at his own time, and the strain of living by rule at Oxford had told upon him more than he knew. Before the end of the summer term in 1894 he left Oxford for



Devonshire, worn out and broken down. "Education," he wrote in his last letter to Skelton, "like so much else in these days, has gone mad, and has turned into a large examination mill." He was so much exhausted that he could not go again to Norway with Lord Ducie,¹ though with characteristic pluck he half thought of paying another visit to Sir George Grey in New Zealand. But it was not to be. During the summer his strength failed, and it became known that the disorder was incurable. With philosophic calmness he awaited the inevitable close, feeling, as he had always felt, that he was in the hands of God. His religion, very deep, constant, and genuine, was not a spiritual emotion, nor a dogmatic creed, but a calm and steady confidence that, whatever weak mortals might do, the Judge of all the earth would do right. "It is impossible," said Emerson, whom he loved and admired, "for a man not to be always praying." The relations of such men with the unseen are an inseparable part of their daily lives. Froude had no more sympathy with the self-complacent "agnosticism" of modern thought than he had with Catholic authority or ecstatic revivalism. To fear God and to keep His commandments was with him the whole duty of man. The materialistic hypothesis he rejected as

¹ "Ducie wanted me to go to Norway with him, salmon-fishing; but I didn't feel that I could do justice to the opportunity. In the debased state to which I am reduced, if I hooked a thirty-pound salmon, I should only pray him to get off."—*Table Talk of Shirley*, pp. 222, 223.

incredible, explaining nothing, meaning nothing, a presumptuous attempt to put ignorance in the place of knowledge.

His soul had always dwelt apart. His early training did not encourage spiritual sympathy, and, except in his books, he habitually kept silence on ultimate things. But he had always thought of them; and as he lay dying, in almost the last moments of consciousness, he repeated clearly to himself those great, those superhuman lines which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Macbeth between his wife's death and his own.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle;
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more.

Still later he murmured, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

He died on the 20th of October, 1894, and was buried at Salcombe in his beloved Devonshire not far from his beloved sea. He "made his everlasting mansion upon the beachèd verge of the salt flood." By his own particular desire he was described on his tombstone as Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, so deeply did he feel the complete though tardy recognition of the place he had made for himself among English

historians. Otherwise he was the most unassuming of men, simple and natural in manner, never putting himself forward, patient under the most hostile criticism which did not impugn his personal veracity. Although the malice of Freeman did once provoke him to a retort the more deadly because it was restrained, he suffered in silence all the detraction which followed the reminiscences and the biography of Carlyle. His temper was singularly placable, and he bore no malice. His father and his eldest brother had not treated him wisely or kindly. But neither of Hurrell Froude nor of the Archdeacon did he ever speak except with admiration and respect. His early training hardened him, and perhaps accounts for the indifference to cruelty which sometimes disfigures his pages. He did not know what a mother's affection was before he had a wife and children of his own. Before he became an honour to his family he was regarded as a disgrace to it, and not until the first two volumes of the History appeared did his father believe that there was any good in him. Yet the Archdeacon was always his ideal clergyman, and the Church of England as it stood before the Oxford Movement was his model communion. With the Evangelical party, represented to him by his Irish friend, Mr. Cleaver, he had sympathetic relations, and practical, though not doctrinal, agreement. His temporary leaning towards Tractarianism was no more than



for authority by training and experience. These ideas run through all Froude's historical writing, which takes from them its trend and colour. Whatever else the male Tudors may have been, they were emphatically men ; and even Elizabeth, whom Froude did not love, had a commanding spirit. Except poor priest-ridden Mary, who had a Spanish mother and a Spanish husband, they did not brook control, and no one was ever more conscious of being a king than Henry VIII. To him, as to Elizabeth, the Reformation was not dogmatic but practical, the subjection of the Church to the State. The struggle between Pope and sovereign had to be fought out before the struggle between sovereign and Parliament could begin.

Liberals thought that Froude would not have been on the side of the Parliament, and they joined High Churchmen in attacking him. Spiritual and democratic power were to him equally obnoxious. He delighted in Plato's simile of the ship, where the majority are nothing, and the captain rules. His opinions were not popular, except his dislike for the Church of Rome. He is read partly for his exquisite diction, and partly for the patriotic fervour with which he rejoices in the achievements of England, especially on sea. Rossetti's fine burden :

Lands are swayed by a king on a throne,
The sea hath no king but God alone :

might be a motto for the title-page of Froude. The

he had acknowledged that there was an explanation of the error. He was sometimes carried away by his own eloquence, and his convictions grew stronger as he expressed them, until the facts on the other side looked so small that they were ignored.

History deals, and can only deal, with consequences and results. Motives and intentions, however interesting, belong to another sphere. Henry and Cromwell, Mary and Pole, Elizabeth and Cecil, are tried in Froude's pages by the simple test of what they did, or failed to do, for England. Froude detested and despised the cosmopolitan philosophy which regards patriotic sentiment as a relic of barbarism. He was not merely an historian of England, but also an English historian; and holding Fisher to be a traitor, he did not hesitate to justify the execution of a pious, even saintly man. Fisher would no doubt have said that it was far more important to preserve the Catholic faith in England than to keep England independent of Spain. Froude would have replied that unless the nation punished those who sought for the aid of Spanish troops against their own countrymen, she would soon cease to be a nation at all. His critics evaded the point, and took refuge in talk about bloody tyrants wreaking vengeance upon harmless old men.

If patriotism be not a disqualification for an historian, Froude had none. Like every other writer, he made mistakes. But he was laborious

perhaps, were his irresistible sense of the ludicrous and irrepressible tendency to sarcasm. Of a famous clergyman he said, "At least they have not put him into a bishop's apron, the emblem of our first parents' shame." "What can education do for a man," he once asked, "except enable him to tell a lie in five ways instead of one?" As a rule, Froude, like most good talkers, listened well, and responded readily. If he had not Carlyle's rich, exuberant humour, he was also without the prophet's leaning to dogmatism and anathema. Sardonic irony was his nearest approach to an offensive weapon, and even in that he was sparing. But he had a look which seemed to say, "Don't offer me any theories, or creeds, or speculations, for I have tried them all."

Perhaps I may be permitted in this connection to describe my one and only experience of Froude and his ways. It was after dinner, and the talk had fallen into the hands, or the mouth, of an eminent administrator, who seemed to be a pillar, a model of talent and virtue. His language was copious, his subject "schoolmaster Bishops," and the services they had rendered to the Church of England. Bishop Blomfield, for example, had procured the appointment of the Ecclesiastical Commission. There might, for aught we knew, be endless examples, and the prospect was appalling. The host was a Roman Catholic, and the guests were not ecclesiastical. Froude came to the rescue. In a gentle voice, and with the air of



training he had himself. Even in his last illness he liked the young man to go out shooting, and always asked what sport he had had. His own father had been a country gentleman, as well as a clergyman, and his brothers, while their health lasted, all rode to hounds. He himself never forgot how he had been put by Robert on a horse without a saddle, and thrown seventeen times in one afternoon without hurting himself on the soft Devonshire grass. He went out shooting with his brothers long before he could himself shoot. For his first two years at Oxford he had done little except ride, and boat, and play tennis. At Plas Gwynant he was as much out of doors as in, and even to the last his physical enjoyment of an expedition in the open air was intense. Yet this was the same man who could sit patiently down at Simancas in a room full of dusty, disorderly documents, ill written in a foreign tongue, and patiently decipher them all. If a healthy mind in a healthy body be, as the Roman satirist says, the greatest of blessings, Froude was certainly blessed. The hardness of his frame, and the soundness of his nerves, gave him the imperturbable temper which Marlborough is said to have valued more than money itself. Of money Froude was always careful, and he was most judicious in his investments. He held the Puritan view of luxury as a thing bad in itself, and the parent of evil, relaxing the moral fibre. The sternness of temperament he had inherited from

his father was concealed by an easy, sociable disposition, inclined to make the best of the present, but it was always there. In the struggle between Knox and Mary Stuart all his sympathies are with Knox, who had the root of the matter in him, Calvinism and the moral law. Few imaginative artists could have resisted as he did the temptation to draw a dazzling picture of Mary's charms and accomplishments, scholarship and statesmanship, beauty and wit. Froude felt of her as Jehu felt of Jezebel, that she was the enemy of the people of God. So with his own contemporaries, such as Carlyle's "copper captain," Louis Napoleon. He was never dazzled by the blaze of the Tuileries and the glare of temporary success. He might have said after Boileau, *J'appelle un chat un chat, et Louis un fripon.*

The peculiarity of Froude's nature was to combine this firm foundation with superficial layers of cynicism, paradox, and irony, as in his apology for the rack, his character of Henry VIII., his defence of Cranmer's churchmanship, and Parker's. He shared with Carlyle the belief that conventional views were sham views, and ought to be exposed. Ridicule, if not a test of truth, is at all events a weapon against falsehood, and has done much to clear the air of history. Froude's sense of humour was rather receptive than expansive, and he did not often display it in his writings. *Tristram Shandy* he knew almost by heart, and he never tired of *Candide*, or *Zadig*.

Voltaire's wit and Sterne's humour have not in their own lines been surpassed. But sure as Froude's taste was in such matters, he did not himself enter the lists as a competitor. He was too much occupied with his narrative, or his theory, as the case might be, to spare time for such diversion by the way. He was too earnest to be impartial.

Where is the impartial historian to be found? Macaulay said in Hallam. The clerical editor of Bishop Stubbs's *Letters* thinks that Hallam, who was an Erastian, had a violent prejudice against the Church. His impartial historian is Stubbs, for the simple reason that he agrees with him. Froude was for England against Rome and Spain. He could oppose the foreign policy of an English Government when he thought it wrong, as in the case of the Crimean War, and of Disraeli's aggressive Imperialism in 1877. But the English cause in the sixteenth century he regarded as national and religious, making for freedom and independence of policy and thought. To be free, to understand, to enjoy, said Thomas Hill Green, is the claim of the modern spirit. Froude would not have admitted that man in the philosophic sense was free, or that he could ever hope to understand the ultimate causes of things. And, though no man was more capable of enjoying the present moment, he would have sternly denied that pleasure, however refined, could be a legitimate aim in life. He was a disciple of the porch, and not of the

garden. It was deeds of chivalry and endurance that he held up to the admiration of mankind. The hero of his History, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, was not a man of brilliant gifts or dazzling attainments, but a sober, solid, servant of duty and of the State. To most people Burghley is a far less interesting figure than his haughty and splendid sovereign, or the beautiful and seductive queen against whom he protected her. Froude judged Burghley, as he judged Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Stuart, by the standards of political integrity and personal honour. The secret of Froude's influence and the source of his power is that beneath the attraction of his personality and the seductiveness of his writing there lay a bedrock of principle which could never be moved.

Professor Sanday, who preached the first University sermon at Oxford after Froude's death, referred to his "fifty years of unwearied literary activity." The period of course included, and was meant to include, *The Nemesis of Faith*. "We all know," continued Dr. Sanday, "how the young and ardent Churchman followed his reason where it seemed to lead, and sacrificed a Fellowship, and, as it seemed, a career, to scruples of conscience. . . . Now we can see that the difficulties which led to it were real difficulties. It was right and not wrong that they should be raised and faced." It is the fashion to regard scruples of conscience as morbid, and the last man who



troubled himself about a test was not a young and ardent Churchman, but Charles Bradlaugh. Froude was "ever a fighter," who wished always to fight fair. He preferred resigning his Fellowship to fighting for it on purely legal grounds, and holding it, if he could have held it, in the teeth of the College Statutes. More than twenty years elapsed before the tests which condemned him were abolished, and in that time there must have been many less orthodox Fellows than he. It was more than twenty years before he could lay aside the orders which in a rash moment under an evil system he had assumed. But he was a preacher, though a lay one, and his life was a struggle for the causes in which he believed. Ecclesiastical controversies never really interested him, except so far as they touched upon national life and character. He wished to see the work of the sixteenth century continued in the nineteenth by the naval power and the Colonial possessions of England. "England" with him meant not merely that part of Great Britain which lies south of the Tweed, but all the dominions of the Sovereign, the British Empire as a whole. What Seeley called the expansion of England was to him the chief fact of the present, and the chief problem of the future. Events since his death have vindicated his foresight. He urged and predicted the Australian Federation, which he did not live to see. To the policy which impeded the Federation of South Africa he was



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